

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Please replace drawing sheets 3 and 7 with the Replacement Sheets submitted herewith.

REMARKS

The Office action mailed December 1, 2006, has been received and its contents carefully noted. Claims 1-17 were pending, claims 2, 7 and 10-17 were objected to, and claims 1, 3-6 and 8-9 were rejected. By this Response, claims 1 and 6 have been canceled and claims 2-5 and 7-15 and 17 have been amended. Support may be found in the specification and the claims as originally filed. No statutory new matter has been added. Therefore, reconsideration and entry of the claims as amended are respectfully requested.

Improper Office Action Type

The Examiner indicated that the Office action was an Ex parte Quayle action as the application is in a condition for allowance.

Applicant respectfully submits that the action mailed December 1, 2006, is incorrectly identified as a Quayle action. Specifically, the Examiner rejected some of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 103(a). Thus, the application was not in a condition for allowance.

Therefore, Applicant requests that the action be properly identified as a first action on the merits and that a three (3) month period for reply be recognized instead of the two (2) month period for Quayle actions.

Objection to the Drawings

The Examiner objected to the Drawings for including reference characters not mentioned in the description.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Drawings and Specification have been amended such that all the reference characters provided in the Drawings are recited in the Specification. In particular, reference characters 23 and 25 in Figures 1, 2 and 3; reference character 15b in Figures 4, 5 and 11; and reference characters 77a, 77b, 77f and 77g in Figure 14 have been inserted in the corresponding description in the Specification and character 49 has been deleted in Figure 3. Further, reference character 35d in Figures 7A and 7B has been corrected to be reference character 35e. No new matter has been added by the amendments to the Drawings and the Specification.

Since all the reference characters have been properly referenced in the description, the objection to the Drawings should properly be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Uchida (US 6,301,278). The Examiner also rejected claims 3, 4, 8 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Uchida in view of Cohen (US 5,615,224).

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims, as amended, are novel and unobvious. Specifically, claims 1 and 6 have been canceled and the remaining claims have been amended to ultimately depend on claims 2 or claim 7. Since claims 2 and 7 are allowable over the art, the amended claims are novel and unobvious.

Therefore, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 103(a) should properly be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner indicated that claims 2, 7 and 10-17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant respectfully submit that claims 2 and 7 have been rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim and the remaining claims have been amended to depend thereon. Therefore, claims 2 and 7 and their dependent claims should be allowed.

Request for Interview

Applicants respectfully request either a telephonic or an in-person interview should there be any remaining issues.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

It is not believed that extensions of time are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in accompanying documents. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), and any fees required therefor are hereby authorized to be charged to **Deposit Account No. 02-4300**, Attorney Docket No. **033035M143**.

Respectfully submitted,
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